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Fourth COMMANDMENT

Abrogated by the

G O S P E L:

O R,

The F O U R T H C O M M A N D M E N T's en-
joining the Observance of the *Seventh Day*
of the Week, as a religious *Rest*, was only
obligatory and binding within the *Jewish*
State.

B U T

The Law of the S A B B A T H being destroy'd,
the C H R I S T I A N I N S T I T U T I O N au-
thoriseeth the Christian's Observance of the
First Day of the Week, as an Holy Festival.

Caleb Fleming

We are not come to the Mount that might be touched, and that
burned with Fire — Nor to the Sound of a Trumpet, and the
Voice of Words — which exceedingly terrified *Moses* the
Mediator — But we are come to Mount *Sion* — to the general
Assembly and Church of the *First-born* — And to *Jesus* the
Mediator of the *New Covenant* — *Heb. xii. ver. 18, — 24.*

Let no Man judge (a *Judaizing Christian*) in respect of an
Holy Day, or of the *New-Moon*, or of the *Sabbath*, which
were a Shadow of good Things to come ; but the Body is of
Christ, *Col. xii. ver. 16, 17.*

L O N D O N:

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T O T H E

Right Reverend Father in God,

G E O R G E,

Lord Bishop of *Carlisle*.

M Y L O R D,

THE Freedom I have taken in throwing these few Sheets under your Lordship's Patronage, will, I hope, be interpreted by your Lordship, when in the most disadvantageous Light, as nothing worse, than a Piece of little Fondness for the *Credit* and *Reputation* which will revert on the *Dedicator*, from your Lordship's being of the same Name with him.

DEDICATION.

The Subject herein discuss'd, is, whether the *Seventh Day* of the Week, as enjoin'd by the *express Letter* of the *Fourth Commandment* in the *Decalogue*, can any Way oblige the Observance of Christians; or, whether any substantial Reasons are found in *divine Revelation*, or, in the *Relation of Things*, that will sufficiently justify the Christian's religious Observance of the *first Day* of the Week, and not the *Seventh*. And as this is a Subject, about which every one should be satisfied, who professes himself not to be without Law to God, but under Law to Christ; I imagin'd that it could be no Way understood, as if design'd to abet the Interest of any particular Party, neither could it appear in any View unworthy the Consideration of such who are in earnest in Religion.

D E D I C A T I O N.

I am acquainted, my Lord, with some valuable Men, who apprehend that the general Practice of Christians is wrong, and accordingly cannot forbear carrying their *Charges* to some Height against the Usage of the Churches. Your Lordship will perceive, that in what I have now wrote, I have had a more immediate and confin'd regard to the Sentiments of these Gentlemen, as they are expressly laid down in *two modern Pamphlets*.

I would therefore humbly presume, my Lord, that since the Subject in debate is of some Importance; if I have contributed, altho' in a small Degree, to set it in a plainer Light, or, if I have added any Thing, to what has been already offer'd in Defence of the common Practice of Christians, touching their religious
Ob-

DEDICATION.

Observance of the *first Day* of the Week; your Lordship, as a PRE-LATE of the Church, will accept, or at least excuse the Freedom of this Dedication.

I must confess that I never had the *Happiness* nor even the *Honour* of a personal Acquaintance with your Lordship; nevertheless, I have been well inform'd that a truly *christian Temper* (which can only give a real Grace to the Mitre) influences and directs your whole Conduct; and hence it is, that I think myself secure in what I have done.

I am indeed apprehensive, my Lord, that I shall not escape the Censures of many, to whom my Circumstances and Character are known. Some of these may perhaps alledge, that I have gone out of my Province,
and

DEDICATION.

and have misemploy'd my Time, as being only a *Lay-Man* who have the Affairs of a large Family to attend: Nevertheless I imagine that this Charge will not fix very heavily upon me till it is prov'd, that whilst I was composing these *Sheets*, I had an Opportunity of doing *something else* which would have been beneficial to *myself*, or *mine*.

But, as one little concern'd about the Censures of others in these Regards, I shall venture to recommend these *Sheets* to the Public; humbly begging your Lordship's Patronage; and do at the same Time most earnestly intreat this Favour, both of the Public, and of your Lordship, that if I have ill executed what I have done, it may, with some Calmness, be put aside among the Productions of others who have also mistook their Way;
nor

DEDICATION.

nor let me be denied the Benefit of a general Pardon.

To avoid Impertinence, I shall only add this humble Request, *viz.* That your Lordship would be persuaded, that I think it my incumbent Duty to pray for your Prosperity, as a *Patron* of true Liberty, or, in other Words, as a sincere Lover of Men. I am,

My Lord,

London,
Jan. 12. 1736.

Your Lordship's

Most Devoted Humble Servant,

CALEB FLEMING.

T H E

Fourth COMMANDMENT

Abrogated by the

G O S P E L.

P A R T F I R S T.

IF we take a view of that part of the world where christianity is profess'd, we shall readily conclude from the universal and uniform practice of christians that they are agreed in the religious observance of one day in seven, and not only so, but that they have fixed upon the *first day* of the week as that day: Notwithstanding this, if we take a more particular and minute survey we shall find that there are some who openly dissent from this general observance, and imagine that the *seventh day sabbath* is yet in force: So that a religious *keeping* of the *first*, and not the *seventh*, they esteem to be no less than an *open violation* of a divine command, and a mere human innovation ^a.

I must freely own that I have conducted myself for many years under those prejudices I imbibed from education in favour of a religious observance of the *first day*: But in order to fix my observance on a rational foundation, I have endeavoured to examine the controversy with an unbiass'd mind:

B

By

^b See to this purpose, two tracts, viz. Mr. Cornthwait's Reflections on Dr. Wright's Treatise on the Lord's Day, and one published in the Year, 1735, called, the Seventh Day of the Week the Christian Sabbath.

By such examination I have canvassed the argument to my own satisfaction, and therefore it is, that I now venture to expose it to public censure.

The general design of this tract, is express'd in the two following particulars :

First, I shall attempt to prove, that the fourth commandment, or that precept in the decalogue given to the *Jews*, which respects the observation of the *seventh day sabbath*, is not of any moral obligation ; but was a merely positive precept, and only binding to the *Jews*.

Secondly, I shall shew the great propriety and fitness of the christian's observance of the first day of the week as an *holy festival*.

The *first* proposition I shall endeavour to clear under the following views,

1. By considering the design and purport of the precept, together with the force of the argument in the reasons annexed.

2. By shewing that it does not appear to have been in force, or observ'd 'till the time of *Moses*.

3. That it was dispensed with among the *Jews*, even by divine direction.

4. And was also dispensed with by *Jesus Christ*, and his disciples.

Argument I. That the fourth commandment in the decalogue, as it respects the observation of the *seventh day sabbath*, is not of moral or immutable obligation, but a merely positive precept, will appear by considering the purport of the precept itself ; *Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy, six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God ; in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, &c.* Hence it is evident that the purport of the precept as given to the

Jews was, *that they should rest from labour*, in order to give ease, and refreshment^a to themselves, their slaves or servants, and their cattle: All of which were properly employed in servile work the other six days, in order to contribute to the supply of their exigencies, or wants; such as of food, raiment, and other conveniencies. See *Exod.* xxxiv. ver. 21. *Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest; in earing time, and in harvest thou shalt rest.* Altho' these were seasons in which they might sometimes have pleaded a sort of necessity for labour.

Exod. xxiii. ver. 12. *Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest; that thine ox, and thine ass may rest; and the son of thine handmaid, and the stranger may be refreshed.*

POOLE on this last text remarks, that the *Jews* had three sorts of sabbaths. First, Of days. Secondly, Of years, viz. the seventh year, or year of release, *Exod.* xxi. ver. 2. *If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free,* *Deut.* xv. ver. 1, 2, 3. *At the end^b of every seven years, thou shalt make a release, even of thy debtor, if a Jew.* Nay, it was to be a sabbath, or rest unto the land; a sabbath for the Lord, *Lev.* xxv. ver. 4. And, thirdly, there was a sabbath of weeks of years, viz. the Jubilee, which was every fiftieth year, *Lev.* xxv. from ver. 8. to ver. 21. it was to be the year following every seventh sabbath of years. All of which institutions appear to have been adapted to the circumstances of the *Jews*; in the observance of which they were strictly enjoined the exercise of piety, and mercy.

B 2

Having

^a *Exod.* xxxi. ver. 17. So God is said to have kept the seventh day, that on it he rested, and was refreshed. ^b At the end of every seven, i. e. in the last year of the seven, *comp.* ver. 9. *Deut.* xiv. ver. 28. *At the end of three years, is said to be, in the third year* chap. xxvi. ver. 12.

Having briefly shewn, that *rest from labour*, was the purport or design of the precept, it will hence appear that *rest from labour* could not be immediately fix'd to the *seventh day*, any more than to the *sixth*, for any reason that could arise from the nature of things, nor would the *ox*, or the *ass*, or their *owner*, have been more injured by their resting on the *sixth* day of every week, had that been appointed rather than on the *seventh*; and therefore if it has any morality at all in it respecting their *rest from labour*, it can only be founded on a general calculation that a seventh part of time was proper and convenient for such rest. I shall next consider the reasons on which the observation is enforc'd, or recommended; and they are three, viz.

1. An imitation of the Creator's rest.
2. As a memorial of their deliverance out of *Egypt*.
3. As it was to be a sign of the covenant between God, and the *Jews*.

I. The observance of the *seventh day*, by resting from labour is urged from an imitation of the Creator's *rest*. *Exod. xx. ver. 11. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.* Here, I think, we may observe, that the Creator's *resting*, was the reason of his blessing, and hallowing: In order therefore to understand the force of the reasoning here made use of, we should examine in what sense *rest* can be apply'd to God; and, I find it apply'd in two respects in the *Mosaic* writings, in *Gen. viii. ver. 21.* it plainly denotes his pleasure, delight, or approbation; for, after *Noah* had come out of the ark and offered burnt offerings, it is said, that the Lord smelled a sweet savour; the *Hebrew* has it, *a savour of rest*: So that if we affix such a sense to
God's

God's rest, in the fourth commandment, it will run thus. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth --- and on the seventh day he smelled a *favour of rest*, i. e. was refreshed, delighted in, and approved of what he had done ; therefore he blessed the seventh day, &c. Again, by *rest* apply'd to God, we may understand his ceasing from his work ; and this appears to be the primary sense of the word *rest*, as applied to him in the precept, compare *Gen. ii. ver. 2, 3.* to which it alludes ; *And on the seventh day God ended, (or had ended) his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*

That this is not spoken of the SUPREME BEING, is, I think, evident from St. *John's* gospel, chap. i. ver. 3. In his description of the *word*, or *logos*, he says, *that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* And the apostle *Paul* to the *Colossians*, (chap. i. ver. 15, 16.) says, *that all things were created that are in heaven ; and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by and for this logos ; this image of the invisible God, this first born of every creature ! In whom it pleased the Father (i. e. the supreme Being) that all fullness should dwell ; or that thro' Christ, HE, i. e. the FATHER, should possess all fullness ; having given him, i. e. the Logos, the preeminence among all beings, ver. 18, 19.*

We may hence very reasonably suppose that at the finishing that *system*, to which our earth belongs, in those six days or periods, the grand agent, the *logos* did take a review of his work ; and at the same time with pleasure observe the several orders of intelligent beings, who were spectators of the whole beautiful *Phænomena*, all applauding the wisdom, power, and goodness that appear'd

appear'd in the stupendous production, and in chorus offering up their admirations and praise to the FIRST CAUSE! Then it was that *the morning stars sung together: Then all the sons of God shouted for joy!* Job xxxviii. ver. 4.----8^a. *And then did he actually cease from such his work.*

To a seventh part of time thus hallowed or sanctify'd, I apprehend the precept refers. Nor is the *example* of the Lord's *resting* to be carried too far; because it is easy to observe, that an imitation of his *resting* from creation after six days labour, would lead us to labour only *one six days*, he having rested, for ought we know, from such his work ever since.

II. Another reason on which the precept is enforce'd, is that the Lord their God had delivered them from a state of *Egyptian slavery*, by a mighty hand, and by an out-stretched arm, Deut. v. ver. 15. *And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, thro' a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.* Which reason appears with great force, as it laid them under the highest obligation to sing the song of *Moses*, 'the Lord he is our God, we will prepare for him an habitation, our fathers God we will exalt him, &c.'

From this consideration also they were led without the least reluctance to admit of the *sabbatizing* or *rest* of their slaves, and cattle, remembering that this precept was enjoin'd by him who had so eminently deliver'd them, or their fore-

^a I am far from imagining that this our system of which *Moses* writes, was the first scene of beings and things that the Eternal and Almighty *Fiat* had produced: On the contrary, I doubt not but that millions of worlds existed thro' an inconceivable number of ages *prior* to this our earth, as subjects of his spacious empire, and boundless dominion!

forefathers out of the greateft flavery, even an inceffant bondage. I add,

By the way, it is very natural to fuppofe that this reafon affign'd for their keeping their fabbath, contained in it a proper direction for their employment on that day, *viz.* that they fhould not only contemplate the Lord their God as the Creator of the world, but alfo as their *Saviour* and *Redeemer*, on whose providence they did daily depend.

III. Another reafon affign'd for the obfervance of their fabbath was, that it fhould be a ftanding *fig*n of the peculiar relation they flood in to God, and he to them. *Exod.* xxxi. ver. 13. comp. with ver. 16, 17. *And the Lord bid Moses fpeak to the children of Israel, faying, Verily, my fabbaths ye fhall keep: For it is a fig*n *between me and you, throughout your generations, for a perpetual covenant: It is a fig*n *between me and the children of Israel for ever, &c.* comp. *Ezek.* xx. ver. 12. *Moreover alfo I gave them my fabbaths; to be a fig*n *between me and them*^a. We may obferve, that *for ever*, and *perpetual*, are terms well explain'd, by that expreffion, *throughout their generations*. Now, as a very fmall acquaintance with the chriitian revelation is fufficient to convince any man that this *covenant of peculiarity* is abolifhed, and that the *Jews* no longer remain the peculiar people of God; it is hence very plain that the *fig*n of that covenant cannot be any longer in force than the *covenant* itfelf, which it fignify'd.

Qu. Since this precept flood in the midft of *nine* more which were confefledly of a moral nature; if this was not fo, how can we account for fuch its fituation?

Anfw. I have not intended by this effay to prove that the *end* and *design* of the *labour* of fix days en-

^a Let it be remark'd, that this *fig*n was to let them know, that it was the Lord that fanctify'd them, or feperated them from the idolatrous nations.

enjoin'd, and the *rest* upon the seventh, as capacitating men for acts of justice and mercy to themselves, and fellow creatures, as well as their pious and becoming regards towards God, was not of a moral tendency: No; my sole view is to prove that the institution of the *seventh*, rather than the *sixth* or *first day* of the week, was of a purely positive, and not of a moral nature; and that therefore this precept, in the sense contended for by the *sabbatists*, is really different in its nature from the other nine: And yet I own, that even positive institutions given by divine authority, are to be regarded by us, so far as they are apparently helpful to virtue, or morality; and that it is dangerous for us, in this view, to despise them.

But more directly, it appears to me from the genius, and disposition of the *Jews*, that this precept given to them, was in every view well calculated to preserve their due regard of those several relations they stood in to God, and one another; and therefore was not improperly placed in the very heart of the decalogue. In like manner has the dispensation of *Jesus Christ* adopted *baptism*, and the *eucharist*, and placed the observance of them among the moral and eternal laws of piety, justice, and benevolence; as being helpful unto, and promotive thereof.

Argument II. I shall next attempt to prove, that the *seventh* day of the week was not observ'd as a sabbath till the time of *Moses*.

This appears to be the state of the case, from the very face of the precept; and from the silence of *Moses* the historian.

From the face of the precept, which plainly refers to that individual single seventh day on which the Creator rested, having finished his six days work, *for in six days the Lord made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is, and rested*
the

the seventh day, by which resting, *he blessed and hallowed it*, i. e. that day on which he rested: Nor do I apprehend that it can intend any more, than a reason offer'd by way of anticipation, inasmuch as we cannot find a prior observance of it mentioned in any one of the rehearsals of this law of the *sabbath*, or in any additional or expletive laws concerning the observation of it: But one might, methinks, have very naturally expected that *Moses* would have urged the *example* of the good old Patriarchs, at some time or other, when he exhorted to the observance, or censur'd for the non-observance of the *sabbath*; for it is well remark'd in a late pamphlet^a, that the observance of the *sabbath* requir'd only *four hands* to convey the tradition of it from *Adam* to *Moses*, viz. *Metbuselah's*, *Shem's*, *Isaac's* and *Amram's*; which had this been the case, viz. that the *sabbath* had been observ'd by them, methinks, *Moses* would have taken some notice of it. Let me add, that he is wholly silent about any such observance quite thro' his history; nor does he assert that one of all the great or good men who make up the thread of his history to his own time ever observ'd it. I shall particularize some of his most important characters.

It does not appear from the *Mosaic* account, that *ADAM* kept the *seventh day* as more holy than any other day; it is true from that account that he was form'd on the *sixth day*, and therefore it follows that the *seventh* must have been the *first* entire day of his existence: Nor, does the contrary appear from that history, but that the *employment* which first actually engaged *Adam*, was his surveying the creatures, and giving them names; which having done, and discerning hereupon the *difference of sex* wanting in his own
C
species,

^a Mr. R. Cornthwait's *Reflect*, p. 11.

species, it tells us, that he was cast into a deep sleep, and that then the Lord God formed the woman out of him. The very next overt-act the historian mentions, was his eating of the forbidden fruit; nor have we the least intimation of any particularly distinguished time which he religiously observ'd, or even so much as the method, or mode of his worship.

Besides, I am apt to imagine that whilst *Adam* continued in his paradisaical state, the law of the seventh day sabbath would have been unsuitable, or at least unnecessary; for that *labour* which produced the sweat of the brow, by which man was to get his bread and on which the reason is founded for rest, appears to have been part of the curse, which was denounced on his transgressing: And therefore the *rest* from such labour could not be wanted, 'till such labour became the lot of man; consequently the law of the seventh day sabbath could not be enjoined *Adam* in innocency.

And on the other hand, had it been after the fall, as what his transgression had render'd necessary, it could not be supposed, but that such a provision made for such his changed circumstances, would have had some mention made of it; but as no mention is made of such provision, I am ready to conclude that it was needless, especially as such an institution is more fitly suited for society, than for a single person, or family.

' In *Gen.* chap. iv. we are told of *CAIN* and *ABEL* sacrificing, ver. 3. *And in process of time* it came to pass that *Cain* brought of the fruit of the ground: In the *Hebrew* it is, *at the end of days*; which word *days* is often put for *years*, as, *Lev.* xxv. ver. 29. within a full year may he redeem it. So *1 Sam.* i. ver. 3. And this man went up yearly out of his city to
 ' worship;

* worship ; in the original it is, *from days to days*.
 * 1 Sam. xxvii. ver. 27. And the time that *David* dwelt in the country of the *Philistines*, was
 * a full year ; in the original it is, *a year of days*.*
 See POOLE on Gen. iv. ver. 4. Which readings may be understood as intimating the particular or proper seasons of the year in which *Cain* brought his *first fruits*; and *Abel* the *firstlings of his flock*, but by no means prove a *seventh day sabbath*.

The next instance we have of worship is in Gen. iv. ver. 26. After *Seth's* son *Enos* was born, *then began men to call on the name of the Lord*; calling on the name of the Lord, was a term made use of to signify some kind of worship, compare Gen. xii. ver. 8. — And there *Abram* built an altar unto the Lord, *and called on the name of the Lord*. Gen. xxvi. ver. 25. And *Isaac* built an altar unto the Lord, *and called on the name of the Lord*. But their *beginning to call on the name of the Lord*, after the birth of *Enos*, I presume, will not prove their having before kept the seventh day sabbath; nor does it with much more clearness intimate that they then began to keep such a sabbath.

But further, some have imagin'd, that by *NOAH's* sending the dove out of the ark, three several times at seven days distance, or intervals, is intimated his keeping the *seventh day sabbath*^a.

So far am I from apprehending the least foundation for such a conclusion, that I rather think, according to the common interpretation of the fourth commandment in the decalogue, when compared with the circumstances *Noah* was in, he must rather have kept a *quotidian sabbath*, all the time he was in the ark. But, lest this should

^a This I remember the honest Mr. *Elwall* to have offer'd by way of conjecture.

be esteem'd inconclusive, I will add a conjecture; which, I think, will amount to a reason in philosophy, for his so sending the dove out of the ark. Let it then be considered, that the several distinct phases of the moon, in its encrease and wane, are at about seven days distance from each other, and that the relation she stands in to our earth, as her satellite, is most intimate: Hence, if we proceed in our enquiries, we shall soon find that her *sweep*, by her proximity to us, so influences and effects a different pressure of our atmosphere, as to cause the ebb and flow of our waters: Hence *NOAH*, no doubt, acquainted with this, observing the age of the moon out of his little window on the top of the ark, sent out the dove to discover what degree of influence she had had upon the face of the waters in the *neap* and *spring* tides, *Gen.* viii. ver. 8, 10, 12. This conjecture, I think, much more reasonable, than that of those who imagine, that his devotions being more solemn on these seventh days, he hereupon sent out the dove to see their efficacy.

Neither do I find any thing like a marking out of the *seventh day* as a sabbath by any of the Patriarchs; of whom we might have expected that they would have stopped or rested in their journeyings on that day: Nor is there the least intimation of any such observance.

Before I leave this head, give me leave to remark, that *Moses* seems in his writings to have made use of the number *seven*, so emphatically as if he esteem'd it a perfect number, or at least, a number that denoted perfection. See to this purpose, *Gen.* iv. ver. 24. *If Cain shall be avenged seven fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven fold.* *Gen.* vii. ver. 2. *Of every clean beast thou shalt take unto thee by sevens, i. e.* according to the original,

ginal, *seven seven*, or seven males, and seven females. I make no application of this, but pass on,

And shall next consider when it was that the *seventh day* appears to have been first marked out for a sabbath.

And this I find to be in the time of *Moses*, *Exod. xvi. ver. 22.*^a *And on the sixth day (i. e. from the time that God had given them manna) they gathered twice as much as they had done on other days; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses, ver. 23. Then Moses inform'd them of the reason of their so doing, by telling them that notwithstanding they had on other days criminally made a reserve for the following day, out of distrust of divine providence, on account of which it stank and became useless, yet it should not be the case with regard to the sixth day; every man might bake and seethe what he wanted for that day, and the remainder might be kept till the morrow, for the Lord had said^b, that the morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath to the Lord. ver. 24, and 25. And what they had laid up Moses bade them eat, for, says he, to day is a sabbath unto the Lord; to day ye shall not find it in the field. ver. 26. Six days ye shall gather it, but on the seventh day — the sabbath, in it there shall be none. ver. 27. Notwithstanding this, the people had so little notion of a sabbath, or of what Moses had commanded them, that there went*

^a *Comp. Neh ix. ver. 9, 13, 14, 15. And made known unto them thine holy sabbaths, and commanded them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant, &c.*

^b *This is that which the Lord hath said*, this expression, I imagine is no proof of its being an application of an old command; for had it been so, the elders of *Israel* were as likely to have known something of it as *Moses*; which by the sequel they appear to have been wholly ignorant of, and therefore it can only refer to what the Lord had said to *Moses* as their prophet and lawgiver.

went out of the people on the *seventh day* to gather, and they found none: For which the Lord reproves them, ver. 28. *How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See! For that the Lord hath given you the sabbath; therefore he giveth you on the sixth day, the bread of two days.* ver. 29. *So the people rested on the seventh day.* ver. 20.

What can be more plain from the whole narrative, than that the people had no *prior* notions of a *seventh day sabbath*, till so marked out, and explained to them? Which *direction*, or *reason*, continued to distinguish the day to them for forty years, ver. 35. And hence it is, I imagine, that in the decalogue, the *seventh day*, is called *the sabbath of the Lord their God*, because he had so miraculously marked out the day for them, by giving them *manna*, as aforesaid.

Argument III. I shall in the third place prove, that the observation of the sabbath was dispensed with among the *Jews*, even by *divine direction*: And that their own prophets have distinguished between an observance of the sabbath, and morality, or those *duties* which are of eternal obligation.

I have already observ'd, that the nature, purport, or design of the precept was a *rest* from all labour, or servile employment; which is strongly expressed, *Exod. xxxi. ver. 15. Six days may work be done, but on the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord, whosoever doeth any work, in the sabbath day he shall surely be put to death.* Lev. xxiii. ver. 3. --- ye shall do no work therein, it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.

Now if we compare this institution so enforced by *Moses*, with the circumcision of their children on the seventh day, which was frequently done, we shall see, that it was thus far dispensed

‘pensed with even in the sense of the *Jews* themselves; for this occasion’d an *Hebrew* proverb, viz. *the sabbath gives way to circumcision*, ‘Joh. vii. ver. 22, 23. thus far *Grotius*.’

But I shall beg leave to insert the text at large, *Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision (not because it is of Moses but of the fathers) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man; if a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at me* (says our Lord) *because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?* Thus paraphrased by Dr. *Claget* — ‘If the eighth day after the birth of a male child, fall upon the sabbath day, you do nevertheless circumcise him, notwithstanding that strict observation of the sabbath which the law of *Moses* requires: And this you do because *Moses*’s law, or indeed, a more *ancient law* given to *Abraham*, requires that every male child should be circumcised the eighth day: If then a child may be circumcised on the sabbath, because, without exception of the sabbath he is to be circumcised on the eighth day; Why are you angry with me for doing a better work on the sabbath day in the perfect cure of a man who was all over infirm? For that law of doing good, and relieving the miserable at all times, is a more *ancient and excellent law*, than either that of the sabbatic rest, or that of circumcision on the eighth day ^b.’

Again, the *Jews* slew their sacrifices on the sabbath day, *Numbers* xxviii. ver. 9, 10. On every sabbath there were *two lambs* extraordinary added to the continual burnt offerings, which sacrifices could not be slain without bodily service

^a See his Truth of the Christ. Rel. translated by Dr. *J. Clarke*, Book V .p. 232. ^b See Dr. *S. Clarke*’s Paraphrase on the place.

vice or labour, and was certainly a dispensing with the *precept*, which forbid any manner of work. Nor is it to the purpose to object that these were acts of religion, and therefore comported with the design of the precept; for it is plain it was not, because our Saviour himself interpreted the act of circumcision (altho' a compliance with a divine institution) as a dispensing with the law of the sabbath: Therefore the killing of their sacrifices on the seventh day must be interpreted as a dispensing also with the law of their sabbath.

But again, *JOSHUA*, the captain of the hosts of *Israel*, encompassed *Jericho* seven times with his forces on the sabbath day, (*Jos. vi. ver. 2*, and *4*, compared,) and this too by divine direction; which must be allowed to be another instance of their dispensing with this law.

It cannot be very improper just to hint at the strict observance the *Jews* had to their sabbath, as may be seen *1 Maccab. ii. ver. 32.—38*. Where they are represented as choosing rather to be murdered in cool blood than make any defence on the sabbath day: Which scrupulosity occasion'd *one thousand* of them to be slain: Upon which slaughter *MATTHIAS* made a law, or passed an edict to tolerate their resistance, *ver. 39, 40, 41*. But notwithstanding this, they retain'd so superstitious a regard for their sabbath, that even but 63 years before the Christian *Æra*, when *POMPEY* took *Jerusalem*, and laid siege to the temple, the *Jews* would not do the least thing offensively, which *POMPEY* perceiving, order'd that no assault should be made on their *sabbaths*, but instead thereof to carry on such works, as, erecting engines, and batteries^a, and in filling up the ditches with which the temple was fortify'd:

All

^a *Prideaux's Connect. part II. book VI. p. 621.*

all which the *Jews* suffered them to do unmolested. So great was the superstition of the *Jews* with regard to the observance of their sabbath!

But under this head, I would observe, that there is a large quotation from Dr. *S. Clarke* inserted in the title page of a Pamphlet lately published, entitled, *The Seventh Day of the Week the Christian Sabbath*.

‘ The moral part of the sabbath, that is, so far as it is a commandment enjoining the virtue of HUMANITY, or of allowing time to those who are under our power to REST from the LABOURS of their worldly Employment; and SO FAR as it is according to the original reason of its institution in Paradise a time set apart for the RELIGIOUS COMMEMORATING OF GOD’S WORK OF CREATION, and PRAISING him for the things that he has made, and serving and worshipping him, as the Maker of all things; this moral part, I say, of the sabbath, is of ETERNAL and unchangeable obligation. Sermon. Vol. X. p. 59.’

To which I would reply, that the Dr. has advanced nothing in all this that will confine what he says to the observation of the *seventh day of the week*, as if this was the moral part of the commandment: But if he had, the Dr.’s practice would evidently have condemn’d such an interpretation, and have proved, indeed, that so far the Dr. was self-condemned, or at least, inconsistent with himself; for it is well known that the Dr. did not sabbatise; *i. e.* observe the *seventh day* of the week as a sabbath, or day of holy rest, pursuant to the *letter* of the fourth commandment. Nor would the Dr. (I am persuaded) in the least deny, but that that part of the precept, which concerns *rest from labour*, is duly observ’d by

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resting *one day in seven*, to wit, *the first*; and that the morality of it, viz. *a religious commemorating of God's work of creation*, PRAISING, SERVING, and WORSHIPPING him as the Maker of all things, does not depend on the doing it on the seventh day of the week. On the contrary, he must have allow'd that the morality of, or the eternal unchangeable obligation unto such conduct is so far from depending on any one day, that such practices, by which we can express our regards to such obligations we are under to the supreme Being, are fit and proper on a *first day*, as well as on a *seventh*; nay are at *all times* duties incumbent upon us. Nor, do I think, that it can be prov'd that the Dr. intended in any view to found the *morality* of the precept upon the separation of the seventh day; for in such a light, the fourth commandment can have no morality at all in it, *i. e.* as it enjoins the *seventh day*, any more than it would have had, if it had enjoin'd the *sixth*; for the *sixth*, in the reason and nature of things, is as holy as the *seventh*, therefore such separation can constitute no part of the morality of the precept; because, according to the quotation now referr'd to, what is *moral* is unchangeable in its nature, or in the words themselves, *is of eternal and unchangeable obligation*.

Let it be farther observ'd, that *two* of their most noted prophets foretold a time as coming when their *sabbaths*, of which they were so fond, would be superseded, together with the *reasons* also of their observance.

JEREMIAH says, chap. xvi. vers. 14, 15. *Therefore behold the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt; but the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel*

Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them.

ISAIAH in chap. lxvi. ver. 23. *And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.*

ISAIAH remarkably distinguishes their strict observation of their sabbaths from moral institutions or duties, chap. i. from ver. 11, to the 18. *To what purpose are the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? — Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination to me, the new moons, and sabbaths — my soul bates. Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, &c.*

I can scarce forbear thinking, but that the very preface of the fourth commandment, *Remember the sabbath day*, seems to indicate its being of a positive nature, as it is in its very diction less absolute than the other nine: On which account the lawgiver may be understood as saying, ‘As to your separating the *seventh day* as a sabbath, altho’ it is a precept of a positive nature, yet since I discern it will be of important service and use to you, therefore I give it this sanction, I charge you to REMEMBER IT.’

To conclude this head, I would add, that *GROTIUS* has mention’d a two-fold design of the fourth commandment in the decalogue, and has call’d it both a *precept of remembrance*, *Exod.* chap. xx. ver. 8. and of *observation*, *Exod.* xxxi. ver. 16. But then he also says, ‘that if the law concerning *rest* on the sabbath, had been given from the *beginning*, and in such a manner as never to be abolished, certainly that law would have prevail’d over all other laws; the contrary to which we now find^a.’

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^a His Truth of the Christ. Relig. Part II. Book V. Sect. 13.

Argument IV. I shall, in the fourth place, shew what regard our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and his followers or disciples paid to the *seventh day sabbath*.

In *Mark ii.* ver. 27. our Saviour expressly says of the very *seventh day sabbath*, *That it was made for man, and not man for it*: Can it then be an institution of moral and indispensable obligation? No; he says, it was made for man, and must give way to any man's necessities; and advises them not to blame his disciples for plucking a few ears of corn, to which hunger had prompted them, tho' it was on the sabbath: For he adds, if the *sabbath* was made for man, who can and may, as it was made for him, occasionally dispense with its laws; surely much more may the *Son of man* be allow'd to be Lord *also* of the sabbath; and as such, may also relax the observance of it. The phrase used in ver. 28. *Son of man*, must, I think, respect *Jesus Christ* himself, it being a term under which he usually describes himself: Beside, the inference or conclusion would appear improper if he intended not himself, for he had before asserted that the *sabbath* was made for man, and must give way to his necessities; and consequently he, as *Son of man*, by way of eminence, must be Lord also: That conjunction copulative *also* seems to make it necessary that we should thus understand him. *Matth. xii.* ver. 6, 7, 8.- 'But, I say, unto you
' that in this place is *one* greater than the temple.
' And had ye known what the prophet *Hosea*
' tells you, and understood his meaning, you
' would have seen that *mercy* is preferable to
' *sacrifice*; and would not have condemned my
' innocent disciples, for satisfying their hunger
' on your sabbath. For the *Son of man*, he that
' is greater than the temple, is Lord of the
' *sabbath day*.'

Object. ‘ It is objected by the *sabbatists*, that
 ‘ our Saviour signify’d that the *seventh day sabbath*
 ‘ should be in force at the destruction of *Jeru-*
 ‘ *salem* — and left no hint of its being after-
 ‘ wards abrogated. *Matth.* xxiv. ver. 20. *But pray*
 ‘ *ye that your flight be not in winter, nor on the*
 ‘ *sabbath day.*’

Dr. S. Clarke has well remarked^a, that this seems to be spoken in condescension to the *Jewish* prejudices, and plainly supposes that the *season* or *holiness* of the time might retard their escape at the destruction of *Jerusalem*.

Mr. Baxter observes^b, that these words of our Saviour had a respect to the *Jews* misery, and not to their *duty*. — For their city was taken on their sabbath, and their rigid sabbatizing encreased their calamity. He goes on to quote a probable conjecture of Dr. Hammond, who says, that it was likelier spoken of a *sabbath year*, when both *war* and *famine* would come together.

However, it will be sufficient that I add, it was not esteem’d proper that the *Jewish* prejudices should be strongly attacked whilst their state continued, as they must have been by an explicit abrogation of their sabbath: Nevertheless it would be proper for the objector to prove, that the christians, or disciples of *Jesus* had any occasion for such a prayer; or that they suffered any more by *Jerusalem’s* being destroy’d on the *sabbath day*, than they would have done had it been on any other day: Otherwise this text will afford no assistance to the cause of the *seventh day sabbath*. But if I mistake not, it does not appear from *Josephus*) that the *christians* were any of them destroy’d in that dreadful calamity: Therefore the text is nothing at all in favour of the sabbatists.

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^a See his Paraphrase on the Place.

^b See his Divine Appointment of the Lord’s Day, p. 194, 195.

Let us, in the next place, see what St. *PAUL*'s opinion was about the obligation of the law of the *seventh day sabbath*.

And in his epistle to the *Colossians*, chap. ii. vers. 16, 17. he is pretty express; for having in the 14th ver. shew'd that Christ had blotted out, or cancell'd the obligation of all those *Jewish* rites and ceremonies which had distinguished them from the rest of mankind; he here says, *Let no man therefore judge you, i. e. you christians, in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath*, which were only temporary services or institutions, or, which suited the *Jewish* æconomy, but at the same time were no more than the shadow is to the substance, when compared with christianity. And, again,

Rom. chap. xiv. ver. 5, 6. *One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike: Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.* Which is thus paraphrased by Mr. *Pyle*; ‘The
‘ *Jewish christian* thinks some days of the week
‘ have more holiness in them than other; the
‘ *Gentile christian* thinks them all alike: For
‘ peace sake let every man enjoy his own senti-
‘ ment.’

Ver. 6. *He that regardeth the day regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he does not regard it; i. e. ‘ out of
‘ a full persuasion that God has freed him from
‘ all obligation to it.’*

So *Gal.* chap. iv. ver. 10, 11. *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years: I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. q. d.
‘ I perceive you are grown zealous observers of the
‘ Jewish sabbaths, new moons, and festivals; if this
‘ temper continues in you, I fear my labours of con-
‘ verting you to the christian religion are all lost b.’*

Beside,

^a *Pyle* on the Place.

^b *Ibid.*

Beside, we may add, that as the peculiarities of the *Jewish* dispensation were but a shadow of good things to come, consequently their *sabbaths* were but typical of that true and substantial rest, which the gospel promises; compare *Heb. x.* ver. 1. with 2 *Thes.* chap. i. ver. 7.

From what has already been offer'd, we may, I think, safely conclude, that neither *Jesus Christ*, nor the apostle *Paul*, have recommended to christians the observance of the *seventh day*, as a *sabbath*.

Argument V. I shall now consider these arguments made use of by the *sabbatists* in defence of the *Jewish sabbath*, which they build upon our SAVIOUR's, and his APOSTLES observance of it.

And, in the first place, they urge, in defence of the *seventh day sabbath*, that our SAVIOUR kept or observ'd it whilst he was here upon earth. A little acquaintance with the history of *Jesus Christ* whilst he sustain'd a public character among men, will shew us, that the false ideas the *Jews* had receiv'd, about the expected *Messiah* as a temporal prince and deliverer, made it dangerous for our Saviour to speak very explicitly about the nature of that kingdom he was going to establish; and never do we find him so plain and open in his instructions, as when *morality* was the subject thereof; for this very reason it was that he spoke in *parables*, and with so much caution both concerning himself, and the design of his mission, lest the multitude should be led to make a faction in the state, and expose him to the animadversions and resentments of the civil power: — Which of itself would sufficiently obviate the difficulty before us, and fully shew that it was no way proper for him, to settle such a particular institution of his church, which would so evidently have abolish'd an *holy day*,
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which they held in the highest esteem, as founded on the express and positive command of GOD their *lawgiver* and *king*.

But to the objection I shall further reply, that it is no wonder that HE did keep the sabbath: Our Lord also was *circumcised*, and kept the *passover* even 'till the time of his death; that *night* before he was betray'd, the sacred historians tell us, he actually kept the *passover* with his disciples: Nor do I know, that he ever by any express precept, edict, or law abrogated the observance of that *Jewish* festival. But will it hence follow, that that institution, with which the people of *Israel* had only an immediate concern should be continued, when a more excellent dispensation which suited all nations was introduced? He, in like manner, frequented their synagogues, and temple, which no christian I presume will offer as a reason for their continuance, any more than for the manner of their worship; both of them being in the *reason* and *relation* of things, plainly antiquated, and laid aside, as incompatible with that scheme of religion, which no where recommends, either by precept or precedent such burthensom rituals in worship, or any extraordinary or figurative holiness of places: But on the contrary lays the whole stress on sincerity of heart, and spirituality of worship^a.

It must be own'd, that our *Lord* came to the *Jewish* nation sustaining the character of a prophet, as foretold of him; but notwithstanding this, it is plain it could no way have suited with his design, to have introduced those laws and settlements of his kingdom, which would immediately and openly have censur'd and condemn'd that system of rites, and observances, by which they had all along been distinguish'd from the rest of mankind,

^a *John* chap. iv. ver. 23, 24. *Act.* chap. vii. ver. 48, 49, 50.

kind, and were conducted or govern'd as a theocracy. On the other hand, he always address'd them with more caution, telling them, that he came not to destroy the *law*, and the *prophets*, but to fulfil all righteousness; therefore it would have been incongruous with his design to have attack'd so early the external and ceremonial part of their constitution; of which they seem to have been so exceedingly tenacious, that even a side glance at their temple's being destroy'd, was look'd upon as a capital crime, and was the only charge brought against the *innocent Jesus* before the *Sanhedrim*, by the *two* false witnesses, *Matth.* xxvi. ver. 61. Yea, their superstition had carried them to such a precise and scrupulous exactness, as even to a tithing of trifling herbs; altho' at the same time they expressed an open neglect of *judgment* and of the *love of God*, *Luke* xi. ver. 42.—Such ignorance and superstition, prevail'd thro' the *Jewish* nation, when the *Messiah* appear'd among them! and therefore it well became the wisdom of God, that the *first* design both of the example of *Jesus*, and of his doctrine, should be to restore them to a due regard to such things as were of eternal obligation; for by so doing they had less room to object either against him, or his doctrine; and no alarm was hereby given to those prejudices, which he would have revived and excited, had he so levell'd his *first* address at their ceremonial observances, as to have discover'd an express abolition of them: For we may easily discern that their *prejudices* run highest in favour of indifferent things, or to what *was* the creatures of their own invention: And it is no wonder it was so, for this has been the case ever since, *viz.* That the zeal and fury of BIGOTS has always been fed, by things entirely foreign to *religion*, or *virtue*! and it could not be otherwise, because so far as

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religion, or *virtue* obtains, no irregular, no dangerous, no hurtful passion will, or ever can be admitted. —

That I have not misrepresented the *Jews*, will appear very obviously from the several gospels; nay, it appears in a very strong light, in the instance already mention'd, wherein the *Jews* condemned the disciples of *Jesus*, for plucking a few ears of corn on the *sabbath day*, tho' it was to satisfy their hunger. In our Lord's plea for them there is discover'd the most masterly stroke of wisdom; says he, don't you remember how DAVID, one of your *worthies*, acted in a case of like necessity, viz. when an hungry; he obliged *Abiathar* the *priest* to give him, and his men of the *shew bread*, which was not *lawful* for any to eat but the priests? Hereby the divine prophet softened their resentments, at the very same time that he weakened, yea, destroy'd the *reason* of their complaint. But to proceed,

That *Jesus Christ* constantly (or at least frequently) attended their *synagogues* on their *sabbath days* was very fit, because at those places, and on those seasons, he had the best opportunity of giving his instructions to the people; the meanest of whom were at liberty on those days to attend instruction.

Again, Had our Lord, or his apostles after him, appointed the *first day* of the week to be religiously observed by all the converts to christianity among the *Jews*, whilst, or during the time their state continued, their doctrine would have been hereupon objected to by the *Jews*, as robbing them of one of their days of labour; so that such of their slaves, and servants, who were convinced of the divinity of the christian doctrine, must have suffer'd great inconvenience hereby; their *infidel masters* not allowing of such recess: But

the benevolent doctrine of *Jesus* recommended itself to mankind in every one of its views, without a necessary introduction even of one civil inconvenience. On the foundation of such like reasons as these, I apprehend, it was, that neither *Jesus Christ*, nor his *apostles* expressly abrogated the *Jewish sabbath*: Nevertheless, I have already shewn that our *Saviour* has expressly asserted the non-moral obligation of the *sabbath*; and that his apostle *Paul* has as expressly marked it out as one of those *distinguishing institutions*, which belong'd to the *Jewish* constitution.

From these hints, we may discern the *goodness* and *tender compassion* of JESUS in the advice he gave to the *Jews* in that foremention'd place, *Matth. xxiv. ver. 20. ----- but pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day*; well knowing how much their many *prejudices*, and *superstitious notions about the holiness of their sabbath* might prove fatal to them, since the destruction of their city and temple was to happen thereon.

Object. ‘ I know it is objected by the *sabbatists* ‘ in favour of the *seventh day sabbath*, that, *Luke* ‘ *xxiii. ver. 56.* is express to their purpose: *And* ‘ *they rested, (i. e. the women rested) the seventh* ‘ *day according to the commandment.* From whence ‘ it is infer'd, that these holy christian women rest- ‘ ed on that day, *either*, according to the old ‘ commandment,—*or else*, according to a new one ‘ received from Christ^a.

What I have already offer'd, I imagine will be sufficient to solve any difficulty arising hence: Nor can I think it so surprising, that, women so dear to *Jesus*, should be left in the dark, by him, with respect to the change, or rather abrogation of the *sabbath*; since the observance of it

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^a See the Seventh Day the Christian Sabbath, p. 9.

was very necessary to the support of christianity in its infant state among the *Jews*. Besides, these holy *christian* women were left in the dark by their Lord in an affair of much greater importance, *viz.* about his *resurrection*; but the objection must much more lose its force, when we consider how cautiously the *first* addressees of the *christian* doctrine were made to the *Jews*; On which principle St. *Paul* conducted afterwards, who became *all things to all men*, that he might gain *some*: On this very account it was that he circumcised *Timothy*^a, *viz.* that he might take off the prejudices of those *Jews* against him who knew that his father was a *Greek*: And yet, I humbly conclude that *circumcision* cannot hereupon be recommended as a *rite* becoming the *christian* covenant.

Object. It is again objected, ‘ If the *sabbath* was changed, how comes it to pass that the *Jews*, who made such a stir about *circumcision*, never offer’d any thing in defence of their *christian sabbath*^b?’

I answer, because the *first christians* continued the observance of the *sabbath* whilst the *Jewish* polity lasted, and, therefore, this complaisance of the *christians* left no room for any such stir among the *Jews* about their *sabbath*: Besides, in the last mention’d instance of *circumcision*, it is evident, that the apostle laid the opposition of the *Jews* by a like complaisance. But, again, it is highly probable that the *Jews*, or at least the *Jewish* converts, did make a stir about their *sabbath*, as may appear from those places foremention’d at large, *Rom. xiv. ver. 5, 6.* and *Gal. iv. ver. 10, 11.*

Object. ‘ It is farther objected, that if those several places already refer’d to in St. *Paul*’s
‘ epistles

^a *Acts*, chap. xvi. ver. 3.

^b Mr. *Corneilwaite*’s *Reflect.* p. 42.

‘ epistles imply an abrogation of the *sabbath*, it
 ‘ will set *St. Paul* against himself, because in his
 ‘ epistle to the *Hebrews*, chap. iv. (wrote 30 years
 ‘ after *Christ*’s ascension) the author therein plainly
 ‘ supposes, that the *Hebrew christians* were then
 ‘ in the observation of the *seventh day sabbath*^a.’

This conclusion, I think, need not be deny’d, and yet the apostle clear’d of contradicting himself. *St. Paul*, it must be own’d in that epistle, has to do more directly with the *Jewish*, or *Hebrew converts*; the *design* of the epistle is manifestly to shew by a comparison of the *christian institution*, with the *Jewish*, the great advantage to be had by the former, in order to animate these converts to a steady adherence thereunto, in a state and time of persecution. And, in this chapter he shews, that by the gospel they had as express a *promise of rest* in heaven, or the future state, as the *Jews* ever had of *Canaan*; nay, that this *rest* promised by the gospel was such, as not only that *rest of Canaan*, but even the *rest of God*, (on which their *sabbath* was founded) were but typical: Even that *REST* concerning which *David* spoke, and exhorted the people of his own day, who were in actual possession of *Canaan*, not to harden their hearts, lest they should come short of it, *Psalms* xcv. ver. 7, — 11.

Besides, this was before the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and, therefore, cannot affect our present argument; nor prove *St. Paul* inconsistent with himself: But if there was any strength in the objection, how much more inconsistency would appear in the conduct of *Paul* in circumcising *Timothy*; if we compare with such his conduct, what he says, *Gal. v.* ver. 2. *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised; Christ shall profit you nothing.* — No other way do I discern of reconciling these diffi-

^a The Seventh Day the Christian Sabbath, p. 20.

difficulties, than by supposing^d that the observation of *circumcision* and of the *sabbath*, were only comply'd with by the apostles in condescension to the *Jewish* prejudices, by means whereof they might with greater acceptance recommend a doctrine of the last importance to the *Jewish* nation ; At the same time, they neither of them appear to have the least foundation in the *laws* and *settlements* of christianity.



PART SECOND.

MY second general proposition, is, that the christians observance of one day in seven as an holy festival, wholly comports with those obligations we stand in to God, and answers all those other moral ends that could be proposed by the *Jewish* precept: And that the *first day* of the week, they, *i. e.* christians, most fitly observe, and separate from the other *six*, as sacred to such purposes.

The *first* part of the proposition will appear true, by comparing the design of the *Jewish* observance, with that of the christians.

And the design of the *Jewish* observance was two fold, *first*, the precept intended an *hebdomadal rest* from labour and servile employment both for *men* and *cattle*: With regard to the latter, *rest* was the absolute, sole, and determinate end of the precept. But as to man, it appears, *secondly*, to have a further view, *viz.* That by these stated weekly intervals of *rest* he should not only receive bodily refreshment, but hereby also universally enjoy a public *opportunity* of acknowledging the relation he, and the whole congregation of *Israel*, stood in to GOD, as their *Former, Saviour, and Lord*; which, indeed, was the true way of keeping holy, or sanctifying their *sabbath*; as hereby it became a barrier against *Polytheism*, and *Idolatry*: To render which design the more effectual, they had *priests, sacrifices*, and a *tabernacle* appointed. Conformable to this, the christians observance of one day in *seven*, by a cessation from all servile labour, and employment, and spent in acts of worship and homage to the *supreme Being*

Being, comports well with every obligation the *Jewish* precept can contain, that is either reasonable, or moral.

I am next to prove, that, the *first day* of the week, and not the *seventh*, is most fitly observ'd by christians as an *holy festival*.

I have already shewn that the reasons on which the *Jewish* precept were founded, are superseded by the *christian* covenant, or institution: I now add, that forasmuch as the *seventh day sabbath*, was a SIGN between God and the *Jews*, of their being his peculiar people; under the gospel, God is not known to us as the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, who brought the children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*; but as the God and Father of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, in whom he is reconciling *all men*, the whole human world unto himself, and so discovering himself to be the common Father of all; *Jesus Christ* by his mediation and doctrine having broken down the wall of partition between *Jew* and *Gentile*, and fully prov'd, that there is now no treaty of partition, no covenant of peculiarity; and consequently, no *sign* of such treaty, or covenant, now is, or can be in force. And hence it follows also, that the *first day* is more properly observ'd by christians than the *seventh*.

Again, Another reason of the observance of the *Jewish sabbath*, was their deliverance out of *Egyptian* bondage.

But *St. Paul* describes the *resurrection* of *Jesus Christ* from the dead, to be a *deliverance* of mankind universally, *i. e.* as far as his gospel is known and believed, from every of those distressing slavish fears, which arose from men's uncertainty about the after-state, and which otherwise would have kept in bondage the whole human family.

See,

See, to this purpose, *Heb.* ii. ver. 14, 15. compar'd with 2 *Tim.* i. ver. 10.—

Again, The *Jewish* precept came recommended from the consideration of *God's having rested from the works of creation on the seventh day.*

But, the revelation of *Jesus* represents the same *Word of the Father*, by which he created the world, as having enter'd upon his *rest* from those *fatigues*, and *labours* he underwent *in flesh* as our exemplar; and this his entrance upon it he describes as having been on the *first day* of the week. It says, indeed, that he lay in the grave all the *Jewish Sabbath*, but this instead of establishing, rather seems to throw a mournful gloom upon the observance of the *seventh day*. Oh! how pensive? how melancholy? how distracted? must the minds of his disciples have been on that day!

Object. It may here be objected, that if the *fourth* precept in the decalogue be abrogated, then, we have no authority left, for the observance of any stated weekly day, as holy, or separate from the other *six* days.

To which I answer, it is plain, that, there could be nothing in the reason or nature of things, that could make the *seventh day* of any week, more holy than the *sixth*, or the *fifth*, or any of the rest, and could only become so distinguished by a positive appointment: For as *time* of which any day is compounded, is nothing but *duration*, or a succession of moments, which in themselves differ not in the least from each other; but only become prophane, or more sacred, strictly speaking, as they are ill, or well used by us: Hence it appears to me, that, if the *Jewish* precept can yet be urged as of any force among *christians*, it can only be defended on our devoting a *seventh part* of our time, or *one* day

in the *hebdomadal* revolution to pious and religious purposes: And, indeed, I must confess, that, as our weeks divide our time to so great an exactness, and as *God* may be consider'd as the sovereign disposer of our time, it thence seems highly reasonable that we should devote at least, a *seventh part* of it, to sacred purposes: And altho' the *Jewish sabbath* appears to be abrogated, yet as it seems to have been given to them as a privilege or blessing to their community, we may reasonably expect that the *christian* institution will leave us something as useful and beneficial in its stead; especially when we consider that it has actually done so in other instances. The *Jews* had *circumcision* as an external *sign*, and *seal* of the covenant they were in with *God*; Instead of which, christianity has provided *baptism* as a more extensive *sign* and *seal*. The *Jews* had the great feast of the *passover*, as a memorial of *God's* interposing for them as their deliverer: Christianity has instituted the *eucharist* as a standing memorial of the love, and interposal of *JESUS CHRIST* our Deliverer and Saviour.

But, more positively, the *christian* revelation has pointed out another day of the week, and not the *seventh*, to be observ'd as an *holy festival*, and, that is the day of the *resurrection* of *Jesus Christ*; which I shall anon prove to be *the most important event* they have to commemorate; and then I shall shew, that the *first christians*, as well as the bulk of *christians* in all ages, have understood it so, and practis'd accordingly.

Object. But, I must *first* mention another objection of the *sabbatists*, and that is, ' they say ' that by a change of the *seventh day* to the *first* ' there is a day lost, and consequently a non- ' compliance with the express letter of the *fourth* ' com-

‘ *commandment*, as it demands a *seventh* of time,
 ‘ or days, as sacred to God.’

Not to take notice of the inequalities discoverable in our solar revolutions, which notwithstanding the *Julian*, and *Gregorian* corrections, are not yet exactly reduced to any common standard; I say, not to mention this, which would itself prove enough: I shall observe, that such a loss as the objection supposes, in the revolution of time, is so small, that the fraction can scarce be assigned; nor was it possible, but that more than this proportion must have been lost by the *Jews* in their weekly observances, as well as by the *sabbatists* now.

But such a loss of time cannot be charged on the *first christians*, altho’ they appear to be the only persons chargeable; because, for some considerable time, they religiously observ’d both the *seventh*, and the *first* days of the week.

Again, If such a punctilio as is here contended for by the objection, would render men culpable before God, as is the case before us, *viz.* the loss of one day in seventeen hundred years: We might very emphatically say, O Lord! Who can stand before thee? But, on the other hand, when we consider what reasons are assignable for such a change, we may with confidence look in the face of our Judge, and *acknowledge* that he himself has marked out the change for us; and in an especial manner has honour’d the observance of the *first day* by his presence, and blessing.

To proceed, since I have intimated, that, the resurrection of *Jesus Christ* from the dead was an event of the greatest importance to *christians*, it will be proper in order to prove it, that I, *first*, state such objections of the *sabbatists* as have an immediate relation to the subject.

Object. ‘ *First*, They ask, why not the day of the week observ’d as sacred on which *Christ* was born, since this was the necessary foundation of the whole superstructure? Or, *secondly*, why not the day of his sufferings? on which so much stress is laid in the *New Testament*, and on which he himself said, IT IS FINISHED.^a

To the *first* I reply, that had this been the case, then indeed the reason for the observance of the *Jewish sabbath* would have appear’d with greater propriety than that on which the *christian festival* was founded, inasmuch as the *Jewish* observance is urged as an imitation of the *Logos*, who rested when he had *finished* his work; and not upon his laying the foundation, or on any subsequent progress in his work: Conformably hereunto is the *christian’s* observance grounded with as great propriety on their SAVIOUR’s entering upon his REST, after having finished the whole labour and fatigue of his work: And consequently would have been unfitly fixed on his birth.

As to the *second Question*, which respects the day of his crucifixion; that this could not be so proper a day for a weekly commemoration, I shall attempt to prove. And I would observe, that that his saying, *It is finished*, respected the whole of his sufferings from the hands of his enemies, as being actually at an end: But the grand confirmation of his mission was yet behind; for had we heard no more of him, he would have been esteem’d an impostor, inasmuch as he himself had prophesy’d of his own personal resurrection, and, therefore, it was absolutely necessary in order to encourage his disciples, and enforce his doctrine, that he should rise again on the third day; accordingly as he had prophesy’d.

Be-

^a *Cornthwaite’s Reflect.* p. 31.

Besides, had a weekly day of commemoration took its date from his sufferings, and been enjoin'd on that foundation, the *institution* would have been laid in a scene of the deepest melancholy; according to *John* xvi. ver. 20, 21, 22. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: And ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy, &c.* q. d. the subject of my death can only make you sorrowful, but on my rising again from the dead, your sorrow shall be superseded, and the traces of it be wholly lost, even as a *woman* remembers no more the anguish of her travelling pangs, for joy that a man is born into the world.

Mr. *Baxter* quotes Dr. *Heylin* as saying, that, it was only the *eastern* churches next the *Jews*, who for a time kept both the *seventh* and *first* days of the week; but not the *western*, who rather turned the *sabbath*, or the *seventh day*, (that is to say, the day on which Christ lay in his grave) into a *fast*^a. And if so, what would the whole body of christians have done, or how behav'd otherwise on a weekly commemoration of his agonies and crucifixion?

‘ I deny not, but, that there are several texts
 ‘ of scripture which lay a stress on the *death*
 ‘ and sufferings of Christ, and represent them as
 ‘ having purchased, justified, redeemed, and
 ‘ cleansed us; yea, and reconcil'd us to God,
 ‘ as, *Acts* chap. xx. ver. 28. *Rom.* v. ver. 9.
 ‘ *Eph.* i. ver. 7. *Col.* i. ver. 20. 1 *John* i. ver. 7.
 ‘ *Rom.* v. ver. 10^b.

Notwithstanding all this, I will yet venture to affirm, that his *resurrection from the dead*, is, that
grand

^a *Baxter* on the Sabbath, p. 28, 29.
 Reflect. p. 31.

^b *Cornthwaite's*

grand event on which, both *Jesus* himself and his apostles recommend the *christian* scheme to the acceptance of mankind: Our Saviour foretels his own resurrection, *John* ii. ver. 19. --- *Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.* Compar'd with *Matth.* chap. xxvi. ver. 61. Again, *John* vii. ver. 33. *Yet a little while I am with you* (says *Jesus* to the *Jews*) *and then I go to him that sent me.* *John* xiv. ver. 20. --- *At that day, i. e.* when I have triumphed over death and the grave, *ye shall know, i. e.* ye my disciples, shall know, *that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you.* Chap. xvi. ver. 16. *A little time, and ye shall not see me,* (because the grave would hide him for a space;) *and again, a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.* And, in *John* xi. ver. 25. he calls himself expressly, *the resurrection and the life.* To the same purpose, *John* chap. xiii. ver. 31, 32. *Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him; if God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.* More expressly, *John* chap. x. ver. 17, 18. *Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. — I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again, this commandment, or power have I received from my Father.* Now it cannot be supposed that the *Father* loved *Christ*, merely *because he laid down his life, that he might take it again;* No; the reason of his love, was rather because of that his extraordinary personal *resurrection* from the dead, by which he would give the greatest credit and efficacy to his mission, and incontestably prove that he received his credentials from God.

In like manner, the apostles also very emphatically refer to this event. St. *PETER*, *Acts* ii. ver. 32. *This Jesus (saith he) hath God raised up,*
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whereof we are all witnesses. Ver. 36. compar'd. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucify'd both Lord and Christ.

So *Acts* iii. ver. 26. Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, &c.

And again, *Acts* iv. ver. 10. Peter declares to the Jewish court, that, by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucify'd, whom God had raised from the dead, he, and John had healed the impotent man.

Nay, it is very remarkable, that the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, or power of God, bestow'd on the apostles and first christians, were dispensed or imparted in order to confirm the truth and certainty of the resurrection of Jesus Christ; see to this purpose, *Acts* iv. v. 31, 32. --- And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness ---- and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Agreeably to which, St. Paul says, *Rom.* i. ver. 4. That Jesus Christ is declared, determined, or proved, to be the Son of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, but in a most remarkable manner, by his resurrection from the dead, which was a fulfilment and completion of those prophecies refer'd to in ver. 2.

Acts xiii. ver. 32, 33. In St. Paul's exhortation to the church at *Antioch*, he says, And we declare unto you the gospel, i. e. glad tidings, or the good news, how that the promise which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children in that he hath raised up Jesus again, &c. Note, the fulfilment of the great gospel promise is expressly said to be made by the resurrection of Jesus; or, that his resurrection from the dead is the gospel, or, the substance of those glad tidings the apostle had to declare to the church at *Antioch*.
Again,

Again, In that famous oration he deliver'd in the court at Athens, he says, Acts xvii. ver. 30, 31. God commandeth all men, every where to repent ; because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Hence, I think, it appears plain, that St. Paul thought the resurrection of Christ a necessary and convincing proof of a future judgment ; as well as of Jesus Christ's being the appointed Judge.

Besides, had it not been for his *resurrection*, he could not have been said to have *destroy'd him* that had the power of *death* ; nor to have *delivered them* from the bondage of such a slavish fear, which the thoughts of death had subjected them unto ; but by his *resurrection* he has *abolished death*, that is, as the Greek word may be render'd, *he has made void the dominion of death*, 2 Tim. i. ver. 10. This conquest Jesus Christ effectually obtain'd by his *resurrection*, as he thereby brought life and immortality to light.

Again, Even the figure itself made use of Rom. chap. vi. ver. 4. lays the emphasis on his resurrection ; buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Ver. 8, and 9. Now if we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him : Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him : From whence I draw this conclusion, that as death was the rate or wages of sin ; so in our deliverance from death consists our freedom, i. e. our pardon, our remission, justification, redemption, and peace : But this our deliverance from death, the gospel fully proves to be the natural, genuine, and certain effect of
Christ's

Christ's resurrection from the dead: Consequently *Christ's resurrection* is an event of the greatest importance to christians.

From a view like this it is, that St. Paul concludes, *that if Christ was not risen from the dead, his preaching was vain, and their faith vain, they were yet in their sins*; even the believing *Corinthians who were washed, and sanctified.* 1 Cor. vi. ver. 11. even of these he says, *that they were yet in their sins if Christ was not risen,* 1 Cor. xv. ver. 14, 17. Because had that been the case, they would have been yet exposed to *death, the rate set upon sin.*

Again, The day of *Christ's resurrection* is called, by God, the day of his being *begotten* by him, *Acts xiii. ver. 33. God hath fulfilled the promise made to the fathers, even to us, in that he hath raised up Jesus again, as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee,* comp. *Heb. i. ver. 5. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; And, again, when God thus brought his first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.* Besides, at this event, (*viz. of his resurrection*) he received an investiture of all power and dominion, as head of the body, the church, according to *Col. i. ver. 18. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead: That in all things, or among all, he might have the preeminence.* So in 1 Cor. xv. ver. 20. the apostle says, *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits, or first begotten of God from Hades, or from the state of the dead; and thus he became the earnest, pledge, and security of the resurrection of the whole human race: Under whose dominion, and care all men are subjected by the Father, not only in this prob-*

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bationary

bationary life, but also in the after, the invisible state.

Thus I have endeavour'd to prove, that the *resurrection of Jesus Christ*, was that most important *event*, on which *christians* have very justly grounded their observance of a *weekly festival*.

Which brings me next to prove, that the *apostles*, and *first christians*, did actually observe such a *festival day*; and that it has been the general, and uniform usage of the church ever since.

But, before I enter directly on this proof, I shall *first* state, and then answer an objection made by the *sabbatists*, against the *first day* of the week's being the day of Christ's *resurrection*.

Quest. ' How shall we prove that *Jesus Christ* ' arose on the *first day* of the week? The wo- ' mens coming in at the end of the *sabbath*, ' *Matth.* xxviii. ver. 1. and finding him already ' risen, will never demonstratively decide this ' question; because for any thing that appears ' to the contrary, he might as well arise on the ' *seventh*, as on the *first day* of the week ---- ' Hence it would be pretty difficult to determine ' on what day of the week, it was on which ' he arose^a.'

In order to make a distinct reply, I shall, *first*, insert the express account as given by the four writers of the life of Christ relating to this event.

And St. *MATTHEW*'s stands thus, *Matth.* xxviii. ver. 1. *In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.*

St. *MARK*'s, chap. xvi. ver. 1. *And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought spices that*

^a The Seventh Day of the Week the Christian Sabbath, p. 13. and Mr. Cernthwaite's Reflect. p. 32.

that they might come and anoint him, and very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

St. *LUKE's*, chap. xxiv. ver. 1. *Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, &c.*

St. *JOHN's*, chap. xx. ver. 1. *The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalen, early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, &c.*

From all which accounts thus much is plain, that none of them knew that he was risen before the *first day* of the week.

But lest this should be thought insufficient to satisfy an objector, I shall add such reasons and circumstances as will amount to a proof, that he did not rise before the *first day* of the week.

And, *first*, had he risen before the *first day* of the week, his own prediction would have been false, *John* ii. ver. 18, 19. *Destroy this temple, (says he, pointing to his body) and in three days I will raise it up.* Now St. *Luke* tells us, chap. xxiii. ver. 44. *That it was about the sixth hour, i. e. about nine o' clock in the morning, when they crucify'd Jesus: And in ver. 53. That Joseph having begged the body of Pilate, took it down and buried it, and, that that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on:* Hence it is plain, that all this must have been transacted on the *sixth day* of the week; therefore, according to his own prediction, he could not rise till the *first day*; for had he risen on the *seventh*, he might then with more propriety and truth have said, that in *two days* he would raise up that body or temple so destroy'd.

What is more full and express to my purpose is *Matth.* xxviii. ver. 2. which says, *And behold there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, i. e. of the sepul-*

chre, and sat upon it. The Greek words, *σεισμος μέγας*, translated, a great earthquake, Dr. S. Clarke renders, a great trembling; and supposes it to be occasioned by the angel's rolling back the stone, which trembling and noise the women felt and heard, whilst they were coming to the sepulchre, and probably were consulting how they should get it rolled away. And, I think, the text will plainly, and without straining bear such a rendering; *And there was a great earthquake, for the angel rolled back the stone, &c.* Nor is it at all probable that Christ was risen before this rolling away of the stone; the historian plainly tells us, that thus the heavenly ministers were sent, to give attendance to the *resurrection* of the HEIR OF ALL THINGS, their Lord, and our Lord.

But further, It consisted not with that tender compassion that *Jesus* bore to his disciples, who were now under the pressure of so much grief, that he should leave them thus dejected and in suspense, any longer than was absolutely necessary: For had he risen as soon as buried, and none had known it, it could have had no efficacy or influence at all upon the minds of his disciples: But their *first* information of his being risen, as I observ'd before, was not before the *first day* of the week, and the circumstances of this their information were the immediate attendants of his rising; from whence I conclude that *Jesus Christ* neither did, nor could rise on the *seventh day* of the week, but must have risen only on the *first*.

But to put it beyond all doubt, our Saviour himself tells his disciples even after he was risen from the dead, that the day of his *resurrection* was on the *third day* of his death, *Luke xxiv. ver. 46.* which must have been on the *first day* of the week, as has been already prov'd^a.

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^a I might have added the express testimony of St. Paul; see *1 Cor. chap. xv. ver. 4.*

Argument III. I now proceed to shew, that the apostles and *first christians* did, in fact, observe the *first day* of the week as a *christian festival*, or holy day.

And, *first*, let it be observ'd that, our Saviour, on the day of his *resurrection*, appear'd to his disciples, to *Mary Magdalen*, Mark xvi. ver. 9. *And to two others of his disciples*, ver. 12. *After that*, on the same day, *to the eleven apostles*, ver. 14. And again, it is said, *John* xx. ver. 26. *That after eight days they were within, and Thomas with them, then came Jesus and gave them his peace*, or blessing : I apprehend we may reckon the day of his *resurrection* as one of the eight, which will determine it to be the next *first day* of the week, the *Jewish* idiom will allow it ; for as great licence as this is took in several places of their scriptures ; for instance, *Gen.* ii. ver. 2. *And on the seventh day God ended his work* ; but no *sabbatist* will allow (I imagine) that he perform'd any part of his work of creation on the *seventh day* ; altho' it is expressly said that he ended his work on the *seventh day*. Again, *Deut.* xv. ver. 1, 2, 3. *At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release* ; whereas it could not be understood, so as it is express'd, viz. *at the end*, because the *seventh year*, was to be a whole entire year of release, comp. ver. 9. So *Deut.* xiv. ver. 28. *At the end of three years* ; is to be understood, *in the third year*, chap. xxvi. ver. 12. compared.

Object. ' It is objected by the *sabbatists*, that as
' *forty days* intervened between the *resurrection* of
' our Lord, and the time of his *ascension*, that
' therefore, it is reasonably to be supposed, that
' he appear'd to his disciples frequently on other
' days of the week ; because there could have
' been but six *first days* in the *forty*, and proba-
bly

ably but five, and that the *third* of his appearances was when *seven* of his disciples were employ'd in fishing; and consequently appearances to them don't seem at all to establish the observance of any one day^a.'

I grant it is not improbable that our Saviour did converse with his disciples on more than five, or six days in the forty: But then, it is observable, that the *two* first times are recorded as on the *first* day of each week; on which days the disciples don't seem by the historians to have been employ'd about their secular affairs; nor is the day of his *third* appearance numerically distinguished, by *first*, or *seventh*; and, therefore, in all probability, was a common day, they being employ'd about their common affairs thereon.

But further, methinks, we may gain some further light into this subject from St. Paul^b, who tells us, that *after this, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once*; which in all probability, must have been on a day separated, and marked out by our Lord, for such a public, and general convention: At which assembly, it is more than probable, that there were none of the unconverted *Jews* present; nor is it at all likely that there were any such *Jews* at any other of those his appearances, wherein his business was immediately with his disciples, *i. e.* to instruct, and inform them *in the nature of his kingdom*; and to assign them the part they were to act under him, in their several provinces: And hence it will follow, pretty plain, that this grand convention could not have been at any of their *synagogues*, or public places of worship, nor on the *Jewish sabbath*; because, on that day the *Jews* frequented all such places of worship: And hence, I imagine, that this *five hundred* must have been conven'd on the *first* day
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^a The Seventh Day the Christian Sabbath, pag. 14, 15.

^b 1 Cor. chap. xv. beg.

of the week also. But further, the apostle seems to have fixed the number of our Saviour's special appearances to *five*, which he has distinguished as follows ; *first*, to *Cephas* ; *secondly*, to the *twelve* ; *thirdly*, to 500 brethren at once ; *fourthly*, to *James* ; *fifthly*, to all the apostles : Which *five times* may probably be so many of the six *first days*, which there could only be in the *forty* ; a *first day* beginning that forty. It is true, St. Paul mentions *his*, i. e. *Christ's*, being seen of himself, but that being confessedly long after the ascension, will not in the least affect the remark.

To proceed, *Secondly*, That day of *Pentecost* on which the Spirit was given in so miraculous a manner was on the *first day* of the week : Men of all nations having an opportunity, on that grand *Jewish festival*, of observing the divinity of the doctrine of *Jesus* attested in so remarkable a manner, as by the gift of tongues.

‘ Mr. Baxter observes ^a, that Dr. Heylin allows, that the day on which the Holy Ghost was given, was the *first day* of the week ; and that the church's observation of *Whitsunday* as the day, and that so early as *Epiphanius*, (and many others say as from the apostles) seems a credible history of it : Nay, *Secondly*, That it is agreed on, that the *Passover* that year fell on the *sabbath day*, and that *Pentecost* was *fifty days* after the *Passover*, therefore it must fall on the *first day* of the week.’ The manner of their settling this feast, we have in *Deut. xvi. ver. 9. Seven weeks thou shalt number unto thee : Begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn ; compare Lev. chap. xxiii. ver. 11. — On the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave the sheaf before the Lord ; ver. 15. and 16. And ye shall count unto*
you

^a Divine Appointment of the Lord's Day, p. 21.

you from the morrow after the sabbath, i. e. that morrow after the sabbath as the first day included in your reckoning, seven sabbaths shall be compleat, even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days.

It being taken for granted that *Pentecost* actually did fall out this year on the *first day* of the week; the disciples being met together in great numbers on that day, and on several other preceding *first days*, will prove their religious observation thereof, at least as much as their going to the *Jewish synagogues* on the *seventh*, will prove their regard to that day; and at the same time is attended with this greater advantage with regard to the *first day*, as it received a greater sanctity by the effusion of the *Holy Spirit* thereon: To this purpose, says Dr. John Owen; ‘ when
‘ the Lord Christ intended conspicuously to build
‘ his church, upon the foundation of his works
‘ and rest, by sending the *Holy Ghost* with his miraculous gifts on the apostles, he did it on this
‘ day ^a.’

But since the *sabbatists* will not allow that these extraordinary blessings vouchsafed the *first christians* on the *first days*, does at all establish the observance of the *first day christian festival*; methinks, it would be somewhat material if they could set against these, some other as extraordinary blessings, χαρισματα, or gifts, communicated to the *christians* on the *seventh day*; which day they assert was observ’d by them as the *christian sabbath*: But since they cannot, I confess the *first day* appears to me to have been designedly made conspicuous, as being dignify’d with the most surprising marks, and ensigns of honour.

Again, Acts xx. ver. 7. And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread;

^a Exercitations on the Lord’s Day, p. 387.

bread, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight. *Μία τὸν σάββατον*, I think, all allow to be rightly render'd, *the first day of the week*, and, therefore I shall take the text as it stands, and apprehend, that it is another instance of the *first christians* observance of the *first day*.

Against which sense of the text there are the following objections, as, *first*, ‘ That here are ‘ two circumstances which plainly shew this meeting to have been occasional : The one is, *Paul’s* ‘ readiness to depart on the morrow never to see ‘ them more. The other is, that this meeting was ‘ evidently in the evening, and held almost all ‘ night, and therefore was not design’d as a precedent for *sabbath worship*.’

In answer to which I would remark, that St. *Paul*, with his companions, abode at *Troas seven days*, ver. 6. But we have no account of their meeting together to *break bread*, on any one of the seven days, but only on the *first*; which is very emphatically expressed, *and upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, &c.* Nor does it appear to have been so occasional as to prove it was not design’d as a precedent for a religious observance of the *first day* of the week : For the *farewel sermon* Paul gave them, appears to have been after the other solemnities of the day were over : And his readiness to depart on the morrow, was the very reason, or occasion, of this his speech, or sermon, continuing till midnight ; but by no means can be prov’d to be the occasion of their meeting together to *break bread* : On the contrary, the very manner of the expression represents such meetings on the *first day* of the week, as familiar, and

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^a The Seventh Day the Christian Sabbath, p. 17. and Mr. Cornthwaite’s Reflect. p. 35, 36.

common. I confess, it is no way unlikely, but that *Paul* preached to them, and instructed them, as he had opportunity on the other *six days*, but this *first day* seems to have been their *public solemn festival*, inasmuch as they met on this day to *break bread*, which was a distinguishing badge of *christian* communion. Agreeable to which, *Justin Martyr* (*August. Epist.* 118.) says of his time, that on the day called *sunday*, there is an assembly of all *christians* whether living in city, or country: And because of their constant *breaking of bread* on this day, it was called *dies panis* ^a,

Again, Another instance of such observance, we have 1 Cor. xvi. ver. 2. *Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

‘ To which it is objected ^b, That here is not so much as an *assembling together* mentioned, but the contrary is plainly imply’d by the apostle’s advising the *Corinthian christians*, not to contribute at a church collection, *but to lay up in store* by himself, or *at home*, as some ancient versions express it, what he found upon the computation of his weekly gain — he could afford to give towards the relief of the distressed saints at *Jerusalem*, that so their charity might be ready when *Paul* came: So that if the *Greek* here be rightly translated, *first day of the week*, this passage plainly proves the *first day of the week* was then reckoned a proper day for persons to cast up their accounts on, to see how God had prosper’d them; and consequently was not accounted a sabbath.’

To

^a Dr. Owen’s Exercit. p. 389. ^b The Seventh Day the Christian Sabbath, p. 18. and Mr. Cornthwaite’s Reflect. p. 36, 37.

To which I reply, that I am surpris'd how any man can see in this text a prohibition, or an advising of the *Corinthians* against a church collection! What must church collections then be discountenanc'd? Or was such an act of mercy and beneficence, which the *supreme Being* prefers to sacrifice; was, I say, such an act as this contribution was, unsuitable for a religious assembly? This could never be the case; for our Saviour himself has expressly taught, that such acts of mercy are a *laying up our treasure in heaven*, Matt. chap. vi. And St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, 1 epist. chap. vi. ver. 19. calls it a *laying up in store* for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they might lay hold on eternal life: That expression, for themselves may explain the expression before us *laying up in store by himself, or for himself*.

Let it be further remarked, that the Greek word *Θεσαυροσυν*, translated *store*, signifies a *common treasury*: And thus Mr. *LOCKE* paraphrases the verse, 'let every one of you, according as he thrives in his calling, lay aside some part of his gain by itself, which the first day of the week let him put into the common treasury of the church, &c.' And in his NOTE he says, 'that *Θεσαυροσυν*, seems used in the sense he has given it. For it is certain, that the apostle directs that they should every Lord's day bring to the congregation what their charity had laid aside the foregoing week, as their gain came in, that then it might be put into some public box appointed for that purpose, or officers hands. For if they only laid it aside at home, there would nevertheless be need of a collection when he came.'

I am equally surpris'd at the objector's conclusion, viz. 'that the first day of the week must at least be reckoned a proper day for persons

‘ to cast up their accounts on, to see how God
 ‘ had prospered them.’ Surely this gentleman
 would have us understand, that the *christian Co-*
rinthians had some certain sum allotted, or an
 exact quotient demanded, which would require
 such a nice calculation, that this contribution
 could not be made by them, any other ways than
 by an arithmetical proportion: The contrary to
 which appears from 2 *Cor.* chap. ix. ver. 7. which
 shews us that the rule of contribution was, *every*
man according as he purposed in his heart, not
grudgingly, nor of necessity. Besides, surely no
 reason can be assign’d why the apostle should
 affix a certain day for their privately depositing
 their cash, in order to an after distribution; any
 other day or time might have done as well, nay
 many times better than the *first day*: But the
 apostle’s manner of addressing them, I apprehend,
 will very awkwardly bear any such interpretation.

Object. Another question is put by way of ob-
 jection, ‘ why *PAUL* should send *TITUS* and
 ‘ others, a considerable time after, to press their
 ‘ being ready, as he mentions, 2 *Cor.* chap. viii,
 ‘ and ix. if their contributions were already put
 ‘ into a common treasury?’

I answer, their contributions being so put, will
 be no objection to *PAUL*’s sending of *TITUS*,
 or his urging the generosity of the *Macedonians*
 as a pattern to them, if we consider that it was
 a collection which was made *weekly*; and the pres-
 sing necessities of the poor *christians* in *Judea* oc-
 casioned this earnest address, in order that the
 church of *Corinth* might be excited by these
MESSENGERS to do their utmost. So that altho’
 there might be a *common box*, which in all probabi-
 lity there was; yet it may be remarked also that on
 the *first day* of every week they had their *church*
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meetings; and it is very likely that few of them could be able to contribute at every such public convention; some therefore did it on one *first day*, some on another; and hence it was that St. Paul says, 2 Cor. ix. ver. 5. *I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren that they would go before to you, and make up before hand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty, or free benevolence, and not as of covetousness, i. e. not as if extorted from you; which view of the apostle, would be more effectually obtain'd by Titus, and the other brethren's stating the circumstances and treatment of the poor christians in Judea.*

Hence, I am apt to conclude from this text, and that other in the *Acts* before mentioned, that it appears plainly, the *apostles* and *first christians* had the *first day* of the week in *religious observation*, as the day on which they publicly assembled, and had their *church meetings*; on which days they exercised themselves more especially in acts of *piety*, and *mercy*; which is indeed the true way of comporting with the design of such an institution.

Argument V. I proceed, in the next place to prove, that it was the usage or custom of the *primitive christians*, and has been of the *church universal*, to observe the *first day* of the week as an *holy festival*, founded on the *resurrection of Jesus Christ* from the dead.

And, *first*, it appears to have been commonly distinguished by *christians* in the year of *Christ* 99, at which time *John* wrote his *Revelations*. For he in chap. i. ver. 10. tells us, *that he was in the spirit*, or had his *Revelations* from the *spirit*; and that this was on the *Lord's day*. On which day *he heard a voice behind him, loud as a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha, and Omega, &c.* v. 11.

So that when we add to this expression of St. *John*, the constant and unanimous usage, and consent of the church ever after (as will appear anon) we shall be apt to think this a sufficient proof that this day here mention'd was the *first day* of the week, and that it must have been familiarly known by the *name* of the *Lord's day*, when *John* wrote his *Revelations*.

Object. ' But it is objected, that we have this expression but *once* throughout the sacred writings, *viz.* the *Lord's day*: Whence then can protestants conclude consistently that St. *John* call'd the *first day* of the week by that name?^a

I reply, it is not pretended by any *protestant* that I know of, that the single consideration of the words of this text will prove, that the day here mentioned by St. *John* was the *first day* of the week: But by comparing it with the usage of *christians* before as well as after, it will amount at least to a strong probability that it was. —

It certainly could not mean the *second coming* of *Christ*^b, because the very words expressly describe the time on which St. *John* had his *Revelation*, or was in the *spirit*; and, therefore I think cannot, without the utmost impropriety, be so apply'd; for then it must be read thus, *on the day of the second coming of Christ I was in the spirit, and I heard a voice, &c.* The word ἐγὼ ἦν, translated, *I was, or have been*, Leusden in his *Compendium*, reads, in the præter tense, *fui in Dominico die* — which as it thus stands cannot be apply'd to a *time to come*, or future; since, in the strictest grammatical reading, it is express'd by a *time* perfectly past, *I was, or have been* in the spirit of the Lord, and the time when *I was* so, *was on the Lord's day, or day of the Lord.*

Nor

^a The Seventh Day the Christian Sabbath, p. 13. ^b *Ibid.* p. 19.

Nor do we pretend to say, that St. *John's* being in the *spirit* on such a day did constitute it a *sabbath*^a, or *holy festival*; but only mention it as a collateral proof, that such an holy day was already in observation and use.

But, *secondly*, that the *christians* in the *first ages* of the church did observe the *first day* as a *sacred festival* in honour of *Jesus*, and grounded on his *resurrection*, I shall prove from sufficient and undeniable authorities: For which purpose I shall beg leave to transcribe very abstractedly, *seven sections* of the late Learned and Right Hon. Lord King, in his *History of the three first Centuries*, under the head of *the circumstances of worship*.

Seet. 5. He observes, that determinate times for worship, were appointed under the *christian*, as well as under the *Jewish* dispensation.

Seet. 6. That the principal, or chief of these prescribed times, was the *first day* of the week, on which they constantly met together to perform religious services. *Just. Martyr, Apol. 2. p. 98. Tertul. de Anima, c. 3. p. 530.* calls them *Dominica solemnities*, or the Lord's days solemnities.

Minutius Faelix observes, that the *christians* assembled to eat on a solemn day. And *Pliny* reports the same, in his epistle to *Trajan*.

Seet. 7. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, calls it *the chief of days*, our rest indeed. *Strom. lib. 6. p. 492.* the *supreme festival*.

On *sunday* we give ourselves to joy ! says *Tertul. Apol. c. 16. p. 638.*

St. Barnabas says, we keep the *eighth day* with gladness, *epist. cathol. §. 11. p. 244.*

And *Ignatius* says, we observe the Lord's day. *Ad Magnes. p. 35.* Banishing every appearance of grief, and esteeming it a sin either to *fast*, or *kneel*, *Tertul. de. Cor. Mil. p. 339, 340.*

This

^a The Seventh Day the Christian Sabbath, p. 19:

This day they accounted holy, *Dionysius apud Euseb. lib. 4. cap. 23. p. 145.*

Clemens Alexandrinus writes thus, that a true christian, according to the commands of the gospel, observes the Lord's day by casting out all evil thoughts, and entertaining all good ones, glorifying the *resurrection* of the Lord on that day, *Strom. lib. 7. p. 535.*

Sect. 8. The reason for their observing this day with so much joy and gladness, was, that they might gratefully commemorate the glorious *resurrection* of their Redeemer that happened thereon. So *St. Barnabas*, *epist. cathol. §. 11. p. 244.* and *Ignatius epist. Ad Magnes. p. 35.* *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Just. Martyr*, and *Origen* to the same purpose.

Sect. 9. Hence it was that this day, both in the Greek and Latin churches, was call'd the Lord's day. *Clem. Alexand. Strom. lib. 5. p. 437.* Among the Latins by *Victorius Petavionensis*, *De Fabric. Mund. apud Dr. Cave Hist. Literar. p. 103.*

It is call'd simply the Lord's, by *Ignatius*, *Ad Magnes. p. 35.*

Sect. 10. Sometimes in compliance with the Heathen this first day of the week is called *sunday*; so termed, because by them dedicated to the sun. So *Just. Martyr*, *Apolog. 2. p. 98, 99.* and *Tertul. Apol. c. 16. p. 688^a.*

But I don't find that they ever so far indulg'd the Jews, as to call it the *sabbath day*.

The word *sabbatum*, in the writings of *Justin Martyr*, and *Tertullian*, is to be understood to signify

^a The ancient christians, dealing with the heathens, call'd that day, which the christians observ'd in the room of the Jewish seventh day, *ἡμέραν ἡλίου*, or *diem solis*, *sunday*. As those who treat and deal with others must express things by the names current among them, unless they intend to be *Barbarians* to them. *Dr. Owen's Exercit. p. 33. §. 13.*

signify a *sabbatizing*, or *Judaical* observance of the *Lord's day*; which they inveighed against.

Thus, says *Ignatius*, instead of *sabbatizing*, let every *christian* keep the *Lord's day*, the day on which *Christ* rose again, the queen of days: On which our *life* arose, and death was conquered. *Epist. Interpol. ad Magnes.* p. 149.

Sect. 11. Their not *sabbatizing* did not exclude their keeping the *Lord's day*; but only forbid a *Judaical* observance of the *sabbath*, or *seventh day* of the week: Yet the *eastern* churches, in complaisance to the *Jewish* converts who were very numerous, perform'd on the *seventh day* the same public religious services, which they did on the *first day*, thus observing both the *one* and the *other* as a *festival*. Whence it is, that *Origen* reckons *saturday* among the *four feasts* solemnized in his time: Tho', on the contrary, some of the *western* churches observ'd it as a *fast*. *Victorinus Petavionensis de Fabric. Mund.* Thus far *Lord King*.

As I never heard of any one's confronting the truth of these authorities, I hope I shall be allow'd to rest on them as fair quotations.

Object. It is further objected, 'That the *first day* of the week does not seem to have ever been observ'd as a *sabbath*, but only as a *festival* in commemoration of *Christ's resurrection*, till *Constantine's* time, who, for several reasons of *his own*, made a law to forbid any manner of work on this day^a.'

I answer, the *first* part of the objection is certainly true, viz. that the *first christians* did not *sabbatise*, but kept the *first day* of the week as a *religious festival*, in commemoration of *Christ's resurrection* not only till *Constantine's* time, but the *christians* have pretended no other sort of keep-

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^a *Cornithewate's Reflect.* p. 19, 20.

ing of it, that I know of, unto this day. What is material in the objection, is, that it allows such an *observance* as being *prior* to the time of *Constantine*: But let the objector also consider, that *Constantine* was the *first christian* emperor, and therefore it was no wonder that there should be *no laws* about the regular observance of this *festival* enacted by the civil power till then; because, all his *predecessors* were either enemies, or at best, no open friends to *christianity*. What materially lies on the objector, is to prove, that whatever additional authority attended the observance of the *first day* of the week, from any law or edict of *Constantine*, that such additional authority was either *unchristian* or unreasonable. But *Constantine's* making laws about the observance of the *first day* of the week, appear not to have laid the foundation of the *christian festival*, but only to have been enacted with a design to regulate the observance thereof.

I shall, in the last place, shew the great propriety of separating a *weekly day* for public worship from common consent, and from the advantage which accrues to society.

Now then let it be observ'd, that *christianity* as it could not, so it never intended to vacate or destroy any of the relations or fitnesses of things: But man, as a creature in society, has ever found it proper to worship *Deity* from a view of that his social dependance, and therefore it has been that public, or social worship obtain'd in the world.

And altho' many nations, have grossly mistook the object of worship, yet they usually agreed in acknowledging something or other, which they substituted in the room of the *supreme Lord of all*.

' Thus the *Ammonites* and *Moabites* had their
' God *Molech*, which signified a king or prince,

' to

‘ to whom they offer’d strange sacrifice ; some-
 ‘ times he is called *Baal*, which signifies a lord
 ‘ or master, both which appellations are men-
 ‘ tion’d the one as explanatory of the other,
 ‘ *Jer.* xxxii. ver. 35.

‘ The *Egyptians* had for their capital deity an
 ‘ Ox, which they called *Apis* or *Serapis*, and
 ‘ likewise they worshipped him under the form
 ‘ or similitude of an Ox. The *Phœnicians* wor-
 ‘ shipped *Jupiter* under the name of *Baal-Samen**,
 ‘ which signifies *the Lord of heaven*.

Others had their *tutelar Deities*, for every day
 of the week, as *Verstegan* has well observ’d, and
 as I remember has shewn, that the *Sun* was
 esteem’d by them as their (*Molech*, i. e.) king
 or supreme ; to this purpose is that reference
 I have already made to *Justin Martyr’s Apolog.*
 where he in compliance with the *Heathen*, whose
 most *sacred day* was consecrated to the *Sun*,
 their *supreme Deity*, he in compliance with them,
 I say, call’d the great *christian* weekly festival,
sunday. Nor, do I see how, even these idolatries,
 could have been supported if there had not been
 some kind of established or public worship kept
 up among them : This, however, I am sure is a
 fair inference, viz. that public or social worship
 could at no time, or in any place be supported,
 without a public and social consent with regard
 to the time of it, as well as the object, or place :
 And hence it was that they worshipped the *Sun*,
 on such a particular day of the week, in such
 nations where the *Sun* was esteem’d as their su-
 preme object of worship.

Now altho’ the consent of barbarous nations
 may prove too much, yet if we add the ad-
 vantages which flow to society from an universal
 consent to worship publickly an object worthy

of the highest adoration, and on principles fit and rational, we should hence be led to see the great propriety of *one day* in a week's being continued as *sacred* to public devotions among *christians*.

Let it be further observ'd, that if *worship*, which is social and public, can only be perform'd by society, and such worship supposes the society to have power to enact such observances, and to have freedom or liberty also to comply with such institutions; by the way, I would hence conjecture, that in the infant state of the world, the circumstances of mankind were such as seem not to have demanded *one separate weekly day* for public *solemn worship*; for the settled government of both the *Antidiluvian* and *Postdiluvian ages*, till the time of the children of *Israel's* coming out of *Egypt*, seems to have consisted in an investiture of power which was lodg'd in the *pater-familias*, or head of every family, and was both *sacerdotal* and *regal*; this seems to have been part, at least, of the *birth right* which *Esau* barter'd away to *Jacob*. Beside, we may add the paucity of good characters found just before the flood; only *one* family that acknowledged the true God — whereas had public social worship been kept up, one might have expected this could scarce have been the consequence. Nay, even after the flood, the *true religion* seems to have been handed down only in particular families; nor have we any account of so much as its being professed by others. And this appears to have been the case, till *Israel* was conducted out of *Egypt* under the ministration of *Moses*, and became a separate people, commonwealth, or *theocracy*, constituted such by God their king: Then it was that a *weekly day* was separated for a public acknowledgment of God's dominion, and of their

dependance on him, and as a means of cementing them by a mutual tie of affection; which is a natural, and ought to be the certain, consequence of social and united prayers and praises to the same God, and for one another; for hereby they might discern themselves to be children of the same Father, subjects of the same Lord, whose head was *one*, whose cause *one*, and whose interest *one*.

Nor did *christianity*, in its infancy, expressly separate any particular day, for *JESUS*, the kind master of the family, had his disciples under daily instructions, and as occasion and opportunity requir'd and allow'd, engaged them in pious and in religious exercises: But altho' neither he, nor his apostles after him, delivered any *express precept* concerning the religious observation of any *one* particular *day* more than of any of the rest; yet inasmuch as *he* by his *resurrection*, and both he and his apostles, after that, have given so many signal notices, by their own example, as well as the extraordinary *descent* of the *spirit* on *that day*, that great confirming *evidence* of the divinity of the *christian doctrine*! Appear as so many solid reasons, on which the observance of the *day* pointed out may be defended; I say, this collective view of it, must be own'd as strong an hint as could be expected in the unsettled and *infant state* of *christianity*, and will afford us great satisfaction. To all which we may add, that a *christian man* is now a member of a *christian society*, but every society has common interests, therefore every *christian man* as a member of such society is concern'd to promote the interests thereof, else he has denied the faith, or the grand principles of *christianity*, and is worse than an *heathen idolater*: But public worship is well calculated to suit the interests of all human societies,
and

and therefore the *christian* ; because *christianity* has not vacated any of the natural relations of things, or the obligations arising therefrom ; consequently, every *christian man* ought to worship God publicly if he has opportunity : But this cannot be done without a time be fixed by public consent, founded on some sufficient reason ; therefore, when such a day for public worship is thus properly mark'd out, fix'd upon, and separated, it ought to be observ'd by *christians* ; nay, this seems to me to be so essentially necessary to the support of *Christ's* visible church in the world, that, to deny, or confound such an universal and harmonious consent, concerning the observance of the *first day* of the week as *sacred* to the memory of a *risen Jesus*, methinks, would be so far from answering any valuable end, that on the other hand, in all probability, it would very much weaken, if not wholly destroy those remaining weak fences of piety that are left in the *christian* world, and greatly prejudice the cause of our exalted *head*, and *Lord*. The *Jews*, it is true, by public consent, according to the express *precept* of *Jehovah*, worshipp'd him on the *seventh day* of the week, and this kept alive the idea of the *unity* of God as the proper object of worship ; but all this while they never worshipp'd GOD thro' the Mediator *Jesus Christ* ; but when *christians* were taught by their master, that hereafter they should successfully address his FATHER in his name, and by his directions, who had most expressly reveal'd the nature and will of the *supreme Being* ; how fit and proper was it, that the day of their public worship should distinctly bear the signatures of a regard and reference to this the great *institutor* of their religion, and *medium* of their homage?

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Object. ‘ The *sabbatists* pretend, that they are
 ‘ the only persons who observe *creation order*^a, as
 ‘ to the *division* of *days*, inasfinuch as they pre-
 ‘ serve the original distinction of *first evening* and
 ‘ *then morning*^b, bounding their *sabbaths*.’

I would observe, that since they insist so much on the observance of *creation order*, that it would be proper for them to prove, that the *Creator* begun *his sabbath* on the evening: Or, at least, shew that the historian has marked out the *seventh day*, in the same manner as he distinctly did all the other *six*: Or else, assign a reason why the particular boundaries of the *seventh day*, should be omitted any more than those of the *sixth* or *fifth*. — Let the objector consider also, that the time of our ordinary *sleep*, or common time of *rest*, don’t seem to be a proper part of that *sacred rest*; nor do I imagine, that any man will venture to assert, that this *kind of rest* is an imitation of the *Creator’s*; but if the command is binding, from the example of the *Creator’s resting* on the *seventh day*, and that *his rest* consisted in continual exercises of pleasing reflections on the produce of the *Almighty’s Fiat*; which *rest* of his *begun* in the *evening*, and continued without intermission to the end of the *seventh day*: If this was the case, I see not how any can defend their devoting so much of this holy time to a prophane or common use, as sleeping the whole night must be; for this surely can be no imitation of the original exemplar. But, methinks, the very words of the *Jewish precept* will justify such a *beginning*, and *ending* of our weekly *holy day* as we practise, if we should take it as a *rule* to *fix* the *boundaries* thereof. It expressly says *thus*, *six days shalt thou labour and do all thy*
work

^a The Seventh Day the Christian Sabbath, beg. and Corn-
 thwaite’s Reflect. p. 8. ^b Gen. i. ver. 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31

work — but the seventh day is the sabbath, &c. So that we should *first* prove that the *days of labour* are not oppos'd to the *days of rest*, or, otherwise, allow that they are oppos'd; if oppos'd, then we might enquire whether the *Jews*, as well as the rest of the world, did not always *begin* their day's labour in the *morning*, or *sun rising*? Man then, according to sacred diction, going forth to his work and labour until the evening^a, which was the *finishing* and not the *beginning* boundary of his day of labour: And by analogy the *evening* ought likewise to be the *finishing* boundary of his day of rest, or of his *sabbath*.

Thus I apprehend, that there is no difficulty in determining the *boundaries* or *limits* of our *holy festival*, since, even by the evident sense of the *Jewish precept*, we ought to *begin* and *end* that day, as we do the *other six*, which we employ in common and bodily labour: For we thereby preserve the *analogy*, and strictly conform even yet to the obligations of that *precept*, supposing it to demand a separating for religious use a *seventh* of our days, or *one day in seven*.

I shall now draw some *conclusions* from the whole.

Con. 1. Hence it is plain that *all* positive *institutions*, altho' establish'd on the foundations of *divine authority*, can only be binding so long as such circumstances continue which support the *reason* of them. They indeed at all times determine their *value* and obligation by their *fitness*, or tendency to promote *morality* or virtue; but when those circumstances of the *subject* are altered, on account of which they were enjoin'd, they naturally relax in their force, and lose their obligation.

Con.

^a *Psal'm civ. ver. 22, 23.*

Con. II. If *one day in seven* appears to have been wisely *instituted* by God, for the religious observance of the *Jews*, in order to secure their homage and fealty to *him* as their *LORD*, *governor*, and *institutor* of their *polity*, it is upon a common *ratio* highly *fit* and reasonable, that when the *doctrine* of a *crucified Jesus* preached to the world as *risen*, prov'd to the *Jews* a stumbling-block, and to the *Greeks* foolishness, that the disciples of this *Jesus* should observe *one day in seven* in honour of him, as the great *founder* of their *polity*, and *institutor* of their *religion*; especially as they are assur'd, that he is *constituted* by the Father, their *head* and *Lord*.

Con. III. I will venture to affirm, that there is as much *morality* in the *christian's* observance of the *first day* of the week, in commemoration of the *resurrection* of their prince and Saviour, as there was in the *Jews* observance of their *seventh day* in commemoration of their deliverance out of *Egypt*; or of its being a *sign* of their relation to God as his people; or from its being an imitation of the Creator's *rest*: For, MORALITY is an observance of those obligations which arise from the relation we stand in to God, and other *beings*. Now the *relation* we stand in, as *christians*, to *Jesus Christ* our *risen head* and *Lord*, has a peculiar *force*, and obligation attending it, which far exceeds all the reasons urged in the *Jewish precept*; and therefore will for ever justify a *first day* weekly observance.

Con. IV. If the *spirit* of *christianity* shew'd itself to be so *benign* and condescending in the
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early ages of it, as to pay so much complaisance to the *prejudices* of the *Jews* whilst their *polity* lasted, as has been observ'd; how are we taught hereby to express and exercise a like *temper* of *charity*, *forbearance*, yea, and *condescension* too, towards such who differ from us in *mere positives* or indifferent things! especially, as considering that *CHRISTIANITY* proposes this as the most proper, yea, as the only method of overcoming *prejudices*, and correcting mistakes.

Con. V. We may observe, that altho' the *primitive christians* behav'd with so much condescension, as even to become *all things*, to *all men*, that they might gain some; yet they did not sacrifice their *christian liberty*, to be reintangled with the yoke of *bondage*; nor give up a *reasonable institution* of their master, for an *antiquated law*, or *institution* of the *Jewish polity*.

Con. VI. To place the observance of the *first day* of the week on the authority of the *fourth* commandment, is, I think, very *incongruous* with the express *letter* of *that precept*, which only obliges to the observance of the *seventh day* of the week, in the most plain terms imaginable. Such inconsistency, may, indeed, as the *sabbatists* observe, give offence to the *Jews*, but can no way convince them of the *truth* of such *conclusions*. On the contrary, they may justly demand a *solution*, or interpretation of such *jargon*, and for want of such *solution*, may expect that the *christian* should carry his complaisance to their *precept*, so far as an *imitation also* of their manner of keeping it.—But by placing the observance of the *first day* of the week, on its being the *day* so highly honour'd by the *resurrection* of *Jesus Christ* from the dead, and on its being a *proper public mark* of
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of *distinction*, which points out the *christian* from the *Jewish institution*, and *polity*; this, in my humble opinion, is putting the observation of it into that light in which it ever stood, and ought to stand.

Con. VII. An observance of the *seventh day sabbath*, by *christians* now, would be nothing less than a returning to *those weak and beggarly elements*, those *carnal ordinances*, which our Lord has long since cancelled, *having nailed them to his cross*. Let us therefore stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, lest by our temporizing with the *Jews*, in the observance of their *sabbath*, we be led to *circumcision* also, and Christ, that is to say, the *christian religion*, or gospel, hereupon profit us nothing.

Con. VIII. I shall add to the foregoing conclusions, that altho' the *christian religion* is a constitution founded on the most excellent and rational principles, even such as have a manifest tendency to exalt and perfect human nature, yet it must be allow'd to be an address made to men, as men possess'd of passions and affections equally of the same kind with those which men possess'd under former dispensations; and consequently, they yet stand in need of the use of such means, as may properly be call'd *instrumental religion*; such as prayer, and praise, and like acts of worship, which are duties incumbent on christians both in private, and more public and social life, and without which, real religion, i. e. the exercise of the true principles of piety and virtue, are not so securely, if at all to be obtain'd. Christians then being, as I have already said, subject to the same passions, and solicited by the same wrong directions and biasses, which take their rise from ill examples and the
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influence of a faulty *education*: It will follow hence, that notwithstanding they may glory in the *simplicity* and pertinency of those *instrumental* parts of *religion* which *christianity* recommends, yet every *man* who has form'd any *just notions* of *human nature* must see the *necessity* of supporting *public worship* in *christian* societies; and be fully persuaded, that the religious observance of the *first day* of the week, as the day of the RESURRECTION of our LORD, is so far from being an *infringement* of our *christian liberty*, that it appears highly *fit* from the *circumstance* and relation of things; and may be justly esteem'd a most advantageous *institution* in the present kingdom and dominion of JESUS among men.

F I N I S.





